United Nations

Daily Highlights

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Croatian Government, in agreement with local Serb authorities, to withdraw armed forces from Maslenica Bridge, Zemunik Airport and Peruca Dam, leaving them under UNPROFOR control; parties to intensify efforts for negotiated settlement, starting with cease-fire.

+ UNHCR appeals to international community for resources for humanitarian relief in former Yugoslavia, but says peace needed most of all; warns that "safe areas" of Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde might have to be evacuated.

+ Under-Secretary-General Jonah says Secretary-General will not take issue of redeployment of Italian UNOSOM II forces "to the brink"; says Operation has had contact with all Somali factions, including "sub-clans" of General Aidid, with view to political reconciliation.

+ Special Representative for Cambodia says UNTAC mission will end by early September with establishment of new Government; seeks emergency budget assistance for transitional administration.

+ Special Representative Beye suspends humanitarian flights to unsafe areas in Angola after aircraft hit by bullets at M'Banza Congo; awaits UNITA report on incident and mechanism to prevent recurrences.

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The Government of Croatia today agreed to withdraw its armed forces and police from Maslenica Bridge, Zemunik Airport and Peruca Dam, leaving them under the exclusive control of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR). In an agreement relating to the implementation of Security Council resolution 802 (1993), the Croatian Government and the local Serb authorities said they would intensify their efforts to reach a negotiated solution to all problems existing between them, starting with a cease-fire agreement to be negotiated by UNPROFOR.

The Co-Chairmen of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, Thorvald Stoltenberg and Lord Owen, welcomed the agreement and expressed the

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hope that it would facilitate further talks which could improve confidence and lead to better relations between the two parties.

Yesterday, a Security Council Presidential statement urged the Croatian Government to refrain from its plan to unilaterally reopen the Maslenica Bridge and the Zemunik Airport on 18 July, in the absence of agreement between the parties in cooperation with UNPROFOR. The Council also called on the parties to cooperate with the Co-Chairmen and with UNPROFOR, and to assure the Force's freedom of access to the area surrounding the Maslenica crossing.

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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Sadako Ogata today appealed to the international community to provide the necessary resources for humanitarian relief in the former Yugoslavia. She told the Humanitarian Issues Working Group of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia that UNHCR needed $195 million for the remainder of 1993. The World Food Programme (WFP) needed $100 million, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) needed $39 million and the World Health Organization (WHO) needed $37 million. However, she said humanitarian action could not be a substitute for decisive political action, and what was needed most of all was peace.

Mrs. Ogata said that the international relief effort in Bosnia and Herzegovina had "little access, little mobility and little security". Without unhindered humanitarian access, the situation of the "safe areas" of Srebrenica, Zepa and Gorazde would become even more disastrous. In the present circumstances, those areas were neither safe nor economically viable; evacuation of the civilian populations might soon prove to be the only life-saving option. If the situation in Sarajevo did not improve, that city would die, she went on to say.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali will not take the issue of the redeployment of Italian forces with the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) "to the brink", James Jonah, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, said today. He told correspondents that the Secretary-General was in close contact with the Italian Government and hoped that the matter could be resolved amicably.

On Wednesday, Kofi Annan, Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations, said the Italian forces had refused to accept certain tasks assigned to them by the UNOSOM II Force Commander, and expressed the hope that they would be redeployed soon in the interest of unity of command. Mr. Annan said he expected that Italian force Commander Brigadier-General Bruno Loi would be "rotated" back to Italy.

Mr. Jonah said UNOSOM II had made considerable progress in advancing peace in Somalia, notably in Kismayo and in the north of the country. The Operation was making contact with all political factions, including "sub-clans" of General Mohamed Farah Aidid, in an effort to bring about

political reconciliation. He recalled that before the international intervention, Somalia had been in total chaos, and people had been starving. If the United Nations showed a lack of resolve now, there would be problems with other warlords and the country would revert to chaos. "If we fail in Somalia, where we have now gone to Chapter VII (enforcement provisions of the United Nations Charter) the repercussions would be devastating, not only in Somalia, but throughout the world", he concluded.

Meanwhile, a United Nations spokesman today said there would be a meeting of Member States contributing troops to UNOSOM II at Headquarters on 21 July.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Cambodia, Yasushi Akashi, today said that the work of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) would end in late August or early September with the adoption of a new constitution and the establishment of a new Government. The country was now being governed by a transitional administration composed of all political parties, he told correspondents.

UNTAC was already making withdrawal plans and its 3,600 civilian police were being disengaged, according to Mr. Akashi. One third of the police would be out of Cambodia by the end of July, another third would leave in August, and the remaining third would depart at the expiration of UNTAC's mandate. Military disengagement would begin on 1 August and end by 15 November.

Mr. Akashi said he was in New York for consultations with the Secretary-General and the Security Council in order to secure emergency budget assistance to keep the transitional administration in Cambodia going for the next two months.

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The Secretary-General's Special Representative for Angola, Alioune Blondin Beye, yesterday suspended humanitarian flights to unsafe areas in the country after an aircraft preparing to land at M'Banza Congo was hit by several bullets and forced to return to Luanda. Humanitarian flights had just resumed that day after the Angolan Government and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) had guaranteed their security. The suspension will remain in force until the cause of the incident at M'Banza Congo has been established by UNITA and a mechanism put in place to prevent recurrences.

The United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH) said in a press release that the incident was a serious violation of international humanitarian law. It expressed grave concern at the plight of the Angolan civilian population, and said the United Nations would spare no effort to provide humanitarian assistance to those in need.

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